

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Administration for Children and Families

Early Head Start Program Grant Availability  
for Fiscal Year 1998

AGENCY: Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

ACTION: Announcement of financial assistance to be competitively awarded to public and non-profit private entities -- including Early Head Start and Head Start grantees -- to provide child and family development services for low-income families with children under age three and pregnant women.

SUMMARY: The Head Start Bureau of ACYF announces that applications will be accepted to establish or expand Early Head Start programs. Such programs provide early, continuous, intensive, and comprehensive child development and family support services on a year-round basis to low-income families with children under age three and pregnant women in order to enhance children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development; to support parents' efforts to fulfill their parental roles; and to help parents move toward self-sufficiency.

DATES: The CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSION of applications is 4:30 p.m. (EDT) on June 25, 1998. Applications postmarked after the closing date will be classified as late and not considered for funding. Applications transmitted to ACYF in any electronic form will not be accepted regardless of date of submission. All applications must be in hard copy form to be considered acceptable.

ADDRESSES: Mail applications to:

Early Head Start Competition  
ACYF Operations Center  
1225 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 415  
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Hand delivered, courier or overnight delivery applications are received during the normal working hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, on or prior to the established closing date at the above address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

The ACYF Operations Center at 1-800-351-2293 (telephone) or 1-703-416-6077 (fax) or the Head Start website at [www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/hsb](http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/hsb).

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This program announcement is divided into five sections:

Part I contains general information and an introductory section which contains the history and background of the Early Head Start program.

Part II contains key program information such as a description of competitive categories, eligible applicants, project periods and applicable Head Start regulations.

Part III contains the requirements for information that must be included in each application.

Part IV contains the criteria upon which applications will be reviewed and evaluated.

Part V contains a discussion of the application process.

Appendix A includes the relevant application forms, certifications, disclosures and assurances necessary for completing and submitting the application.

Appendix B is "The Statement of the Advisory Committee on Services for Families with Infants and Toddlers".

Appendix C is the Head Start Program Performance Standards and other Head Start regulations.

Appendix D is the list of Single Points of Contact in the States.

Appendix E is the list of IDEA Part H Coordinators.

Appendix F is the list of Head Start State Collaboration Network Project Directors

## **Part I: General Information**

### **A. Program Purpose**

With the reauthorization of the Head Start program in 1994, Congress established a new program for low-income families with infants and toddlers and pregnant women which is called Early Head Start. In creating this program, the Congress acted upon evidence from research and practice which illustrates that early intervention through high quality programs enhances children's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development; enables parents to be better caregivers and teachers to their children; and helps parents meet their own goals, including economic independence. Such programs answer an undeniable need. As pointed out in "The Report of the Carnegie Task Force on Meeting The Needs of Young Children," many of the 12 million children under three and their families in the United States today face a "quiet crisis." The numerous indicators of this crisis include: one in four infants and toddlers live in families with incomes below the poverty line; nine out of every thousand infants die before the age of one; and, more than five million children under three receive child care from other adults while their parents work, much of that care being of poor quality. Included with this announcement as Appendix B is a copy of "The Statement of the Advisory Committee on Services for Families with Infants and Toddlers" which provides additional information.

The Early Head Start program provides resources to community programs to address such needs and to achieve the purposes set forth by Congress. The local programs funded through Early Head Start operate as a national laboratory to demonstrate the impact that can be gained when early, continuous, intensive and comprehensive services are provided to pregnant women and very young children and their families.

Programs participating in Early Head Start should:

- o Ensure quality by meeting the requirements in the Head Start Program Performance Standards and other applicable regulations;
- o Provide early, individualized child development and parent education services to low-income infants and toddlers and their families according to a plan developed jointly by the parents and staff;

- o Provide these services through an appropriate mix of home visits, experiences at the Early Head Start center, and experiences in other settings such as family or center-based child care;
- o Provide early opportunities for infants and toddlers with and without disabilities to grow and develop together in nurturing and inclusive settings;
- o Ensure that the Early Head Start program is supportive and nurturing of families;
- o Respond to the needs of families, including, where appropriate, the need for full-time child care for working families;
- o Connect with other service providers at the local level to ensure that a comprehensive array of health, nutrition, and other services is provided to the program's pregnant women, very young children, and their families;
- o Recruit, train, and supervise high quality staff to ensure the kind of warm and continuous relationships between caregivers and children that are crucial to learning and development for infants and toddlers;
- o Ensure parent involvement in policy and decision making; and
- o Coordinate with local Head Start and other child development programs in order to ensure continuity of services for these children and families.

B. Head Start Program Performance Standards

The revised Head Start Program Performance Standards (45 CFR Part 1304) became effective January 1, 1998. A copy of the Standards and other Head Start regulations are included with this announcement as Appendix C. These standards are the program requirements that all grantees must meet in order to assure high quality programs. In addition to defining the standards for Head Start services to preschool children and their families, these regulations provide, for the first time, performance standards for Early Head Start programs serving pregnant women and families with infants and toddlers.

## **Part II. Program Information and Requirements**

### **A. Statutory Authority**

The Head Start Act, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.

### **B. Eligible Applicants**

Applicants eligible to apply to become an Early Head Start program are public and private non-profit agencies proposing to provide Early Head Start services in their local communities. Such agencies include, but are not limited to, current Head Start and Early Head Start providers, child care providers, schools, government agencies, Community Action Agencies, agencies operating pre-K programs and others.

Current Early Head Start grantees may apply to expand the number of children they enroll within the areas they currently serve or to initiate services in other local areas they are not currently serving. Other agencies may not apply to operate in the areas that are already served by current Early Head Start grantees. (Current Early Head Start grantees which are successful in this competition will be given a supplement to their current grant. Their grant project period will remain unchanged.)

Before applications are reviewed, each application will be screened to determine whether the applicant organization is eligible as specified under this section. Applications from organizations which do not meet eligibility requirements will not be considered or reviewed in this competition and the applicant will be so informed.

On all applications developed jointly by more than one organization, the application must identify only one organization as the lead organization and official applicant. The other participating agencies and organizations can be included as co-participants. Only organizations, not individuals, are eligible to apply under this announcement.

Applicants may propose to serve more than one part of their proposed service area, but each applicant may submit only one application.

C. Grant Competition

The funds available will be competitively awarded to eligible applicants to operate Early Head Start programs in unserved or underserved areas.

Grants will be competitively awarded to: (1) eligible applicants (including current Early Head Start grantees) to operate Early Head Start programs in geographic areas not currently served by existing Early Head Start programs, and; (2) existing Early Head Start grantees for the purpose of expanding enrollment in underserved areas within their current service areas.

Applicants will compete against all other applicants proposing to provide EHS services in the same State or, for smaller states, the same multi-state area. Applicants that are Tribal Governments of Federally recognized Indian Reservations (or their designees) will compete against each other.

There will also be two limited competitions, one for Fulton County, Georgia and the other for Harris County, Texas, in which applicants proposing to provide Early Head Start services in one of these areas will compete against all other applicants proposing to serve the same area. This is being done because of recent changes in grantee status in these two communities.

D. Eligible Participants

Participants in the Early Head Start program are pregnant women and families with children under age three who have incomes at or below the poverty line, except that Head Start regulations permit up to ten percent of children in local programs to be from families which do not meet these low-income criteria. The report from Congress discussing the creation of this program encouraged that participating families be identified while pregnant or while their children are infants. Head Start regulations also require that a minimum of ten percent of enrollment opportunities in each program be made available to children with disabilities. Such children are expected to be enrolled in the full range of services and activities in inclusive settings with their non-disabled peers and to receive individualized services, as needed. Applicants may choose to focus on special populations, such as teen parents or

children in foster care, or to design a program linked to welfare reform initiatives.

F. Funding, Project Size and Project Periods

For fiscal year 1998, the Head Start appropriation reserves \$279,250,000 for Early Head Start, an increase of \$120 million over fiscal year 1997. Approximately \$70 million of this increase will be awarded through the competitive process described in this announcement. It is ACYF's intention that awards totalling \$70 million will result in an enrollment increase in Early Head Start of at least 10,000 new children.

There is no specific Federal cost per child limit included in this announcement. ACYF understands that cost requirements for different applicants may vary based on several factors, such as the way in which the program is structured, the costs of operating in different communities and the extent to which resources can be obtained from other funding sources or partners. However, to assure that the minimum enrollment target is achieved, ACYF reserves the right to not fund applicants with unacceptably high per child Federal Early Head Start costs. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to seek as much non-ACYF support as possible to assure that the Federal Early Head Start per child cost is reasonable. Applicants are encouraged to determine if their State or local government has available funds which could be combined with Federal Early Head Start funds to develop jointly funded programs providing high quality Early Head Start services to infant and toddler age children.

Applicants are encouraged to apply for projects that will, when they are fully operational, serve a minimum of 32 infants, toddlers and pregnant women. It is felt that projects serving fewer than 32 children and pregnant women would have difficulty providing high quality services while being cost effective. However, if an applicant is proposing to provide Early Head Start services through a collaborative approach with other providers, the 32 minimum enrollment would apply only to the applicant's total number of proposed children and not to each separate provider.

Current Early Head Start grantees seeking to increase their enrollment may propose adding a smaller number of new enrollees.



ACYF reserves the right, subject to the appropriation of additional Early Head Start funds in FY 1999, to award some or all of the additional FY 1999 funds through this competitive process. The amount, if any, that will be awarded will be dependent on the amount of funds available and the nature and quality of applications received.

The competitive awards made through this announcement will be for a one-year budget period. The project period will be for five years (except for current Early Head Start grantees which will be given supplements to their current Early Head Start grant.) Applications for continuation grants beyond the first one-year budget period, but within the five year project period, will be entertained in subsequent years on a non-competitive basis, subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the grantee and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the Government. All programs will be reviewed at the end of their first year of operation to determine their suitability for receiving continued funding. Continuation funds will be available to serve eligible infants, toddlers and pregnant women who were initially enrolled and those eligible children and pregnant women who replace starting infants, toddlers and pregnant women who leave the program.

Allowable costs for development and administration of an Early Head Start program may not exceed 15 percent of the total approved costs of the program. Costs classified as development and administrative costs are those costs related to the overall management of the program. Additional information pertaining to limitations of costs on development and administration of Early Head Start programs can be found in Head Start regulation 45 CFR 1301.32, **Limitations on Costs of Development and Administration of a Head Start Program**, which is in Appendix C.

Given the importance of careful and thorough planning, it is expected that most programs will spend some portion of their first year focusing on start-up activities. Programs are required to begin serving children, families and pregnant women within the first year. Programs must be fully operational and fully enrolled no later than one year from the date of their grant award.

G. Required Match

Grantees that operate Early Head Start programs must provide at least 20 percent of the total approved costs of the project. The total approved cost of the project is the sum of the ACYF share and the non-Federal share. The non-Federal share may be met by cash or in-kind contributions, fairly evaluated, including facilities, equipment or volunteer services. Therefore, a project requesting \$100,000 in Federal funds must include a match of at least \$25,000 (20 percent of the \$125,000 total project cost). Applicants are encouraged to provide more than the minimum 20 percent non-Federal share. In certain instances, such as those described in Section 640(b) of the Head Start Act, the requirement for a 20 percent non-federal match may be waived in part or in whole.

H. Applicable Head Start Standards

Agencies that receive funding under this announcement must adhere to the Department of Health and Human Services' regulations that govern discretionary grants generally and to certain of the regulations that govern Head Start programs specifically. The Head Start regulations that apply to Early Head Start are: Head Start Grants Administration, 45 CFR Part 1301; Program Performance Standards for Operation of Head Start Programs by Grantee and Delegate Agencies, 45 CFR Part 1304; Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance in Head Start, 45 CFR Part 1305; and Head Start Program Performance Standards on Services for Children with Disabilities, 45 CFR Part 1308.

The effective date for the revised Head Start Program Performance Standards was January 1, 1998. All Head Start and Early Head Start programs must comply with the revised Performance Standards. Applications for Early Head Start grants must provide evidence of the applicant's knowledge of and capacity to meet the relevant Head Start regulations, including the requirements of the revised Performance Standards.

All Early Head Start programs will be required to periodically report program information such as services provided, collaborative arrangements achieved, staff training and costs. Grantees are encouraged to use an automated information system, such as the Head Start Family Information System (HSFIS).

### **Part III. Application Requirements**

#### **A. Purpose**

The project description provides a major means by which an application is evaluated and ranked to compete with other applications for available assistance. The project description should be concise and complete and should address the activity for which Federal funds are being requested. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. Applicants are encouraged to provide information on their organizational structure, staff, related experience, and other information considered to be relevant. Awarding offices use this and other information to determine whether the applicant has the capability and resources necessary to carry out the proposed project.

#### **B. General Instructions**

Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. ACYF is particularly interested in specific factual information and statements of measurable goals in quantitative terms. Project descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance, not length. Extensive exhibits are not required. (Supporting information concerning activities that will not be directly funded by the grant or information that does not directly pertain to an integral part of the grant funded activity should be placed in an appendix.) Pages should be numbered and a table of contents should be included for easy reference. Applicants should provide a summary of the project description which includes:

- o The name and address of the applicant agency.
- o The total number of children and pregnant women to be served at the point in time when the program is fully operational.
- o The total ongoing Federal Early Head Start funds requested for a 12 month period when the project is fully operational. (Do not include here any one-time start-up funds that are being requested).
- o The amount of any proposed one-time start-up Federal Early Head Start funding requested.
- o The amount and source of any additional funding that will help support the project (i.e., funds that are in addition to Federal Early Head Start funds and beyond

the amounts required to meet non-federal-share requirements).

- o The community to be served (name of town(s), city (ies) and the county (ies), or the Federally recognized Indian Reservation where children will be served.
- o The type of program option(s) proposed (the part-day, full-day, home-based, or combination program option or locally-designed options such as family child care) and proposed hours per day and days per year that children will be served in each option.
- o The target date for beginning full services to new children.

C. Objectives and Need for Assistance

Clearly identify the physical, economic, social, financial, institutional, and/or other problem(s) requiring a solution. The need for assistance must be demonstrated and the principal and subordinate objectives of the project must be clearly stated; supporting documentation, such as letters of support and testimonials from concerned interests other than the applicant, may be included. Any relevant data based on planning studies should be included or referred to in the endnotes/footnotes. Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information, as needed. In developing the project description, the applicant may volunteer or be requested to provide information on the total range of projects currently being conducted and supported (or to be initiated), some of which may be outside the scope of the program announcement.

**The Head Start Bureau is particularly interested in the following:**

1. State the objectives for the program. Indicate how these objectives are based on an assessment of community need and how they relate to Head Start Performance Standards. Describe the process used to assess the need for the proposed program. If an assessment already exists, the applicant should describe the process used and explain any additional consultation as it relates to the development of the proposed program.

2. Specifically identify the population to be served. Indicate the proposed enrollment size and the number of infants, toddlers and pregnant women to be served.
3. Identify as precisely as possible the geographic location of the service area of the proposed program. Describe the key characteristics of the targeted service area and what resources are or are not available to serve pregnant women, infants and toddlers. Provide information on the target area that demonstrates that there is a sufficient number of eligible, unserved infants, toddlers and pregnant women in the area to justify the proposed enrollment size. Demonstrate that the geographic area is currently unserved or, for current Early Head Start grantees proposing to expand within their current service area, underserved by an Early Head Start program.

D. Results or Expected Benefits Expected

Identify the results and benefits to be derived.

**The Head Start Bureau is particularly interested in the following:**

1. Based on the stated program objectives, identify the specific results or benefits that could be expected for children, families and pregnant women participating in the program. Identify the specific community-wide results or benefits including those resulting from collaborative partnership with other child and family development staff working in a variety of community agencies.
2. Identify both qualitative and quantitative data the program will collect to measure progress towards the stated results or benefits. Identify how the program will determine the extent to which it has achieved its stated objectives.
3. Provide assurances that the program will collect data on groups of individuals and geographic areas served, types of services provided, service utilization information, types and nature of needs identified and met, and such other information as may be required periodically by ACYF.

E. Approach

Outline a plan of action which describes the scope and detail of how the proposed work will be accomplished. Account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Cite factors which might accelerate or decelerate the work and state your reason for taking the proposed approach rather than others. Describe any unusual features of the project such as design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and community involvement.

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections of the accomplishments to be achieved for each function or activity in such terms as the number of people to be served. When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

Identify the kinds of data to be collected, maintained, and/or disseminated. Note that clearance from the U.S. Office of Management and Budget might be needed prior to a "collection of information" that is "conducted or sponsored" by ACYF. List organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals who will work on the project along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

**The Head Start Bureau is particularly interested in the following:**

1. Describe the planning the program will conduct during the start-up period to prepare for implementation of the program and explain how stakeholders in the community will be involved in the planning, including the Policy Council, where appropriate. Indicate how the program will utilize the services of a start-up planner.
2. Explain the approach and any special efforts you will use to recruit and enroll low-income infants, toddlers and pregnant women from the target recruitment area.
3. Describe how the program will ensure that at least ten percent of enrollment opportunities will be made available to children with disabilities (as defined by the IDEA Part H Lead Agency for the State (See list at Appendix E.)). Indicate how the staff will coordinate their efforts with Part H agencies to ensure children with disabilities and their families receive high

quality services. Note: Part H, of the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) will be named Part C on July 1, 1998.

4. Indicate how the program will provide child development services. Describe the program philosophy, curricula, staffing patterns, staff qualifications, quality of physical environments and other information that will comprise the program's model for supporting the intellectual, social, emotional and physical development of infants and toddlers served. Indicate how the program's child development approach will support the parent-child bond and how staff will support continuity of care arrangements.
5. Describe how high quality infant and toddler child care will be provided to children of parents who are working or in training, to children who require out-of-home care due to special parental circumstances, such as substance abuse treatment, or to children who are in foster care. Discuss the relationship between these resources and the program's overall child development approach. Describe the process the program will use to determine that child care (provided either directly or through referral) will be of high quality and ensure that it meets the Head Start Program Performance Standards. Include the location and description of the proposed child care facilities and describe any improvements and the costs associated with them which may be required to comply with the Head Start Program Performance Standards. Indicate if the facility is immediately available or indicate the estimated date for occupancy. In addition, describe the program's approach to developing capacity in communities where high quality infant/toddler child care is lacking.
6. Describe how the program will ensure that children are transitioned from EHS into developmentally-appropriate program services once the children reach the age of three. Current Head Start grantees should explain how the program will serve children upon their leaving the Early Head Start program.
7. Describe the specific approaches for providing, either directly or through referrals, ongoing well-baby and well-child health services such as early and periodic screenings, diagnosis, treatment, immunizations, nutritional assessments and anticipatory guidance.

8. Describe the program's procedures for developing and implementing individualized family partnership agreements. Describe how your family partnerships approach will assist families and individual members in identifying, pursuing and achieving goals. Explain how you intend to work with other service delivery systems which require a similar plan, such as the Part H Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), to ensure that the family only needs to complete one plan and that one plan can be used by all relevant programs to ensure a seamless service delivery system for the child and family.
9. Describe how the program will develop relationships with parents and promote opportunities for parents (including fathers) to be involved in the program.
10. Describe what services the program will provide, either directly or through referrals, to promote adult and family health and wellness. Identify and explain the mental and physical health services which will be made available and accessible to the families of the infants and toddlers served by the program. Describe what the program will do to promote women's health and wellness prior to, during and after pregnancy. In addition, describe what the program will do to facilitate access to mental health services, substance abuse prevention and treatment services and smoking cessation programs for affected families.
11. Describe what services the program will provide, either directly or through referrals, to promote progress toward economic self-sufficiency for parents.
12. Describe what assistance the program will provide, either directly or through referrals, to families in obtaining needed income support, child support and related assistance.
13. Identify the existing transportation resources available to families in reaching services provided at the program site and in off-site locations. Describe any transportation arrangements the program will make to ensure that children and pregnant women are able to access needed services.
14. Describe the program's approach to Community Partnerships. Describe how the program will be coordinated with other programs and services in the community which serve pregnant women, infants, toddlers



and their families and how the program will assist in the development of local community capability, expertise and commitment to carry out comprehensive service programs built around the needs of low-income pregnant women and families with very young children. Describe any barriers to collaboration in your community and explain the program's strategy for addressing these. Identify by name specific providers, agencies and organizations with which the applicant will coordinate in order to carry out the requirements of this project. Applicants should furnish formal interagency agreements or contracts (if available) indicating which services will be provided to which program participants and for what periods of time by each of those provider agencies and/or organizations.

15. Describe linkages with community resources that the program will establish and maintain during the planning, implementation and operation of the program: health and nutrition (e.g., public health departments and other health providers and programs including Title V, Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and Medicaid prenatal care services and the Medicaid Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment program (EPSDT)); early intervention agencies (e.g., Part H local lead agency or, if available, local interagency coordinating councils and University Affiliated Programs); mental health and substance abuse prevention and treatment agencies; child welfare and foster care agencies; the agency administering Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); education agencies (e.g., local preschool, child care, Head Start, and elementary schools); other Early Head Start programs; child care resource and referral agencies and their networks; business (e.g., the local Private Industry Council); parent groups; and other strength-building organizations.
16. Describe the organizational structure that supports the program objectives. Indicate how staff positions are assigned and their major functions and responsibilities. Indicate the mechanism for staff supervision and support. Indicate how the program will ensure that teaching staff have sufficient qualifications in working with infants and toddlers. Please note the revised Head Start Performance Standards require that Early Head Start staff working as teachers with infants and toddlers must obtain a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential for infant and toddler caregivers or an equivalent credential that

addresses comparable competencies within one year of hire as a teacher of infants and toddlers (45 CFR Part 1304.52 (f)).

17. Describe the approach to staff development and the rationale for choosing that approach. Describe the training, technical assistance, and supervision that will be provided to ensure continued enhancement of staff skills, qualifications and teamwork. Describe how training and technical assistance opportunities will be coordinated with other service providers in the community so that Early Head Start both provides and benefits from the knowledge, expertise, and training opportunities of other relevant community programs and service delivery systems. Describe how the program will ensure that staff are knowledgeable about the rights of children with disabilities and are capable of providing such infants and toddlers with high quality care in a supportive and developmentally appropriate environment.
18. Describe the key management activities the program will engage in during the start-up year. Indicate how the program will be fully operational no later than 12 months after the grant award. Provide a description of the procedure to be used for assessing the program's progress toward stated objectives. Indicate how program data will be collected and analyzed. Include a description of any automated information systems that will be utilized for purposes of continuous improvement and how confidentiality of data will be maintained. Indicate how the program will establish a Policy Council and Health Services Advisory Committee as required in the Head Start Performance Standards.

F. Geographical Location

Describe the precise location of the project and boundaries of the area to be served by the proposed project. Maps or other graphic aids may be attached.

G. Additional Information

Following is a description of additional information that should be placed in the appendix of the application:

1. Staff and Position Data

Provide a biographical sketch for each key person appointed and a job description for each vacant key position. A

biographical sketch will also be required for new key staff as appointed.

## 2. Organization Profiles

Provide information on the applicant organization and cooperating partners such as organizational charts, financial statements, audit reports or statements from CPAs/Licensed Public Accountants, Employer Identification Numbers, names of bond carriers, contact persons and telephone numbers, child care licenses and other documentation of professional accreditation, information on compliance with Federal/State/local government standards, documentation of experience in the program area, and other pertinent information. Any non-profit organization submitting an application must submit proof of its non-profit status in its application at the time of submission. The non-profit agency can accomplish this by providing a copy of the applicant's listing in the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) most recent list of tax-exempt organizations described in Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code, or by providing a copy of the currently valid IRS tax exemption certificate, or by providing a copy of the articles of incorporation bearing the seal of the State in which the corporation or association is domiciled.

**The Head Start Bureau is particularly interested in the following:**

- a. Describe the applicant's experience in management of comprehensive child and family development services to infants and toddlers and their families as well as pregnant women. Describe the applicant's experience in management of community, State and Federal partnerships. Describe the applicant's history and relationship with the target community. Include a complete discussion of the program's financial status and program operations. Include an organizational chart of the program.
- b. If the applicant represents a consortium of partner agencies, explain the relevant background of each partner and its experience in planning and implementing programs to serve children and families. Each partner should provide a letter of commitment which authorizes the applicant to apply on behalf of the consortium.
- c. Indicate the structure and functions of key staffing positions that will have responsibility for the proposed program. Indicate their educational training

and experience working in similar programs. Provide resumes. Build on the answer to Part III, Section E, Number 16 by explaining how these particular staff comprise a multi-disciplinary team of experts that support the accomplishment of program objectives. In addition, explain how the ethnic and racial composition and language proficiencies of these particular staff are reflective of the community where the program will be located.

- d. Describe the procedures the program will use to implement and conduct continuous improvement activities. Indicate how these activities will help staff develop plans and address identified problems to ensure that operations effectively implement Federal regulations.

### 3. Third-Party Agreements

Include written agreements between grantees and subgrantees or subcontractors or other cooperating entities. These agreements must detail scope of work to be performed, work schedules, remuneration, and other terms and conditions that structure or define the relationship.

#### **The Head Start Bureau is particularly interested in the following:**

Describe the collaborative relationships the applicant will develop in order to maximize resources in the community. In the area of child care designed to meet the needs of low-income parents, describe collaborative approaches to funding and service delivery with other community-based child care agencies and providers or other child care funding sources. In partnerships with child care agencies and providers, indicate how the child care programs will gain the benefit of Early Head Start resources and experience in enhancing the quality of staffing and program services to levels consistent with Head Start Program Performance Standards. Include letters of commitment from child care and early childhood agencies that will assist the grantee in delivering services.

### 4. Letters of Support

Provide statements from community, public and commercial leaders that support the project proposed for funding.

H. Budget and Budget Justification

Provide line item detail and detailed calculations for each budget object class identified on the Budget Information form. Detailed calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. The detailed budget must also include a breakout by the funding sources identified in Block 15 of the SF-424.

Provide a narrative budget justification that describes how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocability of the proposed costs.

**The Head Start Bureau is particularly interested in the following:**

1. Grantees are to submit a budget which clearly indicates the amount of funds being requested to fully operate a program for a 12 month period when the program is fully operational. This on-going amount should be reflected on line 15A of the SF-424. (Any one-time start-up costs such as facility renovation, equipment acquisition, or staff training should be requested and discussed as an addendum to the budget. Such costs should not be included in the on-going budget or on the SF-424.)
2. Describe how these budgets reflect high quality, ongoing services provided at a reasonable cost. Explain what efforts the applicant has made or will make to secure other community cash and in-kind resources, besides those shown in the budgets, and what additional resources will be used to support the provision of Early Head Start services to children and families.
3. In providing high quality infant and toddler child care, applicants should describe how a variety of existing community resources will be utilized and maximized. Provide documentation of the additional resources that will be combined with Early Head Start funds to provide high quality child care which meets the Head Start Program Performance Standards. Explain and itemize these resources or services and indicate whether or not these costs are included as part of the non-federal share.

4. Each budget should include the required non-Federal share of the cost of the project (See Part II, Section G).
5. Provide information on the facilities the applicant will use, including the estimated cost and scope of any changes that are needed and when such facilities are available. In most cases, it is expected that, given the finite project period for which Early Head Start grants will be funded, applicants will not propose to use Early Head Start grant funds to purchase, construct or undertake a major renovation of a facility. If an applicant, however, believes that such a purchase, construction or major renovation is in the best interests of the government, and can demonstrate this in its application, it may propose to purchase, construct or undertake a major renovation of an Early Head Start facility.
6. Include discussions on the appropriateness of staff compensation levels and funds set aside to assure ongoing staff development and training; costs associated with special equipment and technological needs and the removal of architectural barriers for persons with disabilities; renovation costs associated with providing environments conducive to the high quality provision of child and family development services; and costs associated with family transportation and emergency resource needs, etc.
7. In the proposed budget, applicants must set aside sufficient funds so that at least two staff members can travel to Washington, D.C. for two annual meetings of four days each to be convened by ACYF.
8. Applicants must set aside sufficient funds so that at least one staff member can travel to a mid-point in the U.S. for two trips per year of seven days each for intensive training.

#### **Part IV. Evaluation Criteria**

In considering how applicants will carry out the responsibilities addressed under Part III of this announcement, competing applications for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated against the following six criteria. The point values following each criterion indicate the numerical weight each criterion will be accorded in the review process.

##### Criterion 1. Objectives and Need for Assistance (10 points)

The extent to which, based on community assessment information, the applicant identifies any relevant physical, economic (e.g., poverty in the community), social, financial, institutional, or other issues which demonstrate a need for the Early Head Start program.

The extent to which the applicant lists relevant program objectives that adequately address the strengths and needs of the community.

The extent to which the applicant describes the population to be served by the project and explains why this population is most in need of the services to be provided by the program.

The extent to which the applicant gives a precise location and rationale for the project site(s) and area(s) to be served by the proposed project. The applicant needs to demonstrate that the geographic area is currently underserved or, where applicable, unserved by Early Head Start Programs.

Information provided in response to Part III, Section C. of this announcement will be used to evaluate applicants on this criterion.

##### Criterion 2. Results or Benefits Expected (10 points)

The extent to which the applicant identifies the results and benefits to be derived from the project and links these to the stated objectives.

The extent to which the applicant describes the kinds of data to be collected and how they will be utilized to measure progress towards the stated results or benefits.

Information provided in response to Part III, Section D of this announcement will be used to evaluate applicants on this criterion.

Criterion 3. Approach (25 points)

The extent to which the applicant demonstrates a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Head Start Program Performance Standards.

The extent to which the applicant explains why the approach chosen is effective in light of the needs, objectives, results and benefits described above.

The extent to which the approach is grounded in recognized standards and/or guidelines for high quality service provision or is defensible from a research or "best practices" standpoint.

Information provided in Part III, Section E of this announcement will be used to evaluate applicants on this criterion.

Criterion 4. Staff and Position Data and Organization Profiles (20 points)

The extent to which the proposed program director, proposed key project staff, the organization's experience, including experience in providing early, continuous, and comprehensive child and family development services, and the organization's history with the community demonstrate the ability to effectively and efficiently administer a project of this size, complexity and scope.

The extent to which the applicant's management plan demonstrates sufficient management capacity to implement a high-quality Early Head Start program.

The extent to which the organization demonstrates an ability to carry out continuous improvement activities.

Information provided in response to Part III, Section G. 1. and 2. of this announcement will be used to evaluate applicants on this criterion.

Criterion 5. Collaboration/Third Party Agreements (15 points)

The extent to which the applicant presents documentation of efforts (letters of commitment, interagency agreements,



etc.) to establish and maintain ongoing collaborative relationships with community partners.

The extent and thoroughness of approaches to combining Early Head Start resources and capabilities with those of other local child care agencies and providers to provide high quality child care services to infants and toddlers which meet the Head Start Program Performance Standards.

Information concerning collaboration which is provided in response to Part III, Section G. 3. of this announcement will be used to evaluate applicants on this criterion.

Criterion 6. Budget and Budget Justification (20 points)

The extent to which the program's costs are reasonable in view of the planning and activities to be carried out and the anticipated outcomes.

The extent to which the program has succeeded in garnering cash or in-kind resources, in excess of the required Federal match, from local, State, other Federal or private funding sources. The extent to which costs for facilities are reasonable and cost effective.

The extent to which the salaries and fringe benefits reflect the level of compensation appropriate for the responsibilities of staff.

The extent to which assurances are provided that the applicant can and will contribute the non-Federal share of the total project cost.

Information provided in response to Part III, Section H of this announcement will be used to evaluate applicants on this criterion.

## **Part V. The Application Process**

### **A. Required Forms**

Applicants interested in applying for funds must submit a complete application including the required forms included at the end of this program announcement in Appendix A. In order to be considered for a grant under this announcement, an application must be submitted on the Standard Form 424 (approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under Control Number 0348-0043), a copy of which has been provided. Each application must be signed by an individual authorized to act for the applicant and to assume responsibility for the obligations imposed by the terms and conditions of the grant award. Applicants requesting financial assistance for non-construction projects must file the Standard Form 424B, Assurances: Non-Construction Programs (approved by the Office of Management and Budget under Control Number 0348-0040). Applicants must sign and return the Standard Form 424B with their application. Applicants must provide a certification concerning lobbying. Prior to receiving an award in excess of \$100,000, applicants shall furnish an executed copy of the lobbying certification (approved by the Office of Management and Budget under Control Number 0348-0046). Applicants must sign and return the certification with their application.

Applicants must make the appropriate certification of their compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988. By signing and submitting the application, applicants are providing the certification and need not mail back the certification with the application. Applicants must make the appropriate certification that they are not presently debarred, suspended or otherwise ineligible for award. By signing and submitting the application, applicants are providing the certification and need not mail back the certification with the application. Applicants must also understand that they will be held accountable for the smoking prohibition included within P.L. 103-227, Part C Environmental Tobacco Smoke (also known as Pro-Children's Act of 1994). A copy of the Federal Register notice which implements the smoking prohibition is included with the forms. By signing and submitting the application, applicants are providing the certification and need not mail back the certification with the application.

B. Application Submission

Applicants submitting proposals should use the following format guidelines: Proposals should be organized according to the evaluation criteria located in Part IV. For each of the six specified criteria, applicants should provide information in response to the application requirements described in Part III of this announcement. These application requirements are cross-referenced by number in the last paragraph of each criterion.

One signed original and two complete copies of the grant application, including all attachments, are required. Each application must be limited to no more than 75 double-spaced pages of program narrative (not including the project summary and the forms which make up the SF-424A). If the narrative portion of the application is more than 75 double-spaced pages, the other pages will be removed from the application and not considered by the reviewers. The attachments/appendices to each application must be limited to no more than 75 pages, (in addition to the 75 pages permitted for the narrative portion of the application). If the attachments/appendices to each application are more than 75 pages, the other pages will be removed from the application and not considered by the reviewers.

C. Application Considerations

Applicants will be scored against the evaluation criteria described above. The review will be conducted by a panel consisting of experts in the areas of child and family development and other related fields.

The results of the competitive review will be taken into consideration by the Associate Commissioner, Head Start Bureau, in recommending the projects to be funded. The Commissioner of ACYF will make the final selection of the applicants to be funded. An application may be funded in whole or in part, depending on the relative need for services, applicant ranking, geographic location, proposed costs, including the extent to which the applicant has secured other funding sources, and funds available.

The Commissioner may elect not to fund applicants that have management, fiscal, or other problems and situations that make it unlikely that they would be able to provide effective Early Head Start services. The Commissioner may also decide not to fund projects that would require unreasonably high costs or large initial start-up costs for facilities or equipment.

Successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Financial Assistance Award which sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant, the budget period for which support is given, and the total project period for which

support may be provided.

In awarding grants to eligible applicants, the Commissioner shall ensure an equitable geographic distribution of awards among urban and rural areas and among the States.

Subject to the availability of additional resources in FY 1999 and the number of acceptable applications received as a result of this program announcement, the Commissioner may elect to fund grantees in FY 1999 from the pool of applications submitted in response to this announcement.

ACYF will determine when the project period begins for Early Head Start grants.

D. Checklist for a Complete Application

A complete application consists of the following items in this order:

Front Matter:

- o Cover letter
- o Table of Contents
- o Project Description Summary

- (1) Application for Federal Assistance (SF424)
- (2) Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs (SF424A&B)
- (3) Project Description and Appendices
- (4) Proof of non-profit status
- (5) Assurances Non-Construction Programs
- (6) Certification Regarding Lobbying
- (7) Where appropriate, a completed SPOC certification with the date of SPOC contact entered in line 16, page 1 of the SF 424

Attachments/appendices should be used only to provide supporting documentation such as maps, administration charts, position descriptions, resumes, and letters of intent/agreement. Please do not include books or video tapes as they are not easily reproduced and are therefore inaccessible to the reviewers. Each page should be numbered sequentially.

E. Due Date for the Receipt of Applications

Deadlines: The closing date for submission of applications is **4:30 p.m. (EDT) on June 25, 1998**. Applications postmarked after the closing date will be classified as late and not considered for funding. Mailed applications shall be considered as meeting the deadline if they are either received on or before the deadline date or sent on or before the deadline date and received by ACYF in time for the independent review. Applicants should be mailed to:

Early Head Start Competition  
ACYF Operations Center  
1225 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 415,  
Arlington, VA 22202

(Phone # is 1-800-351-2293)

Applicants are cautioned to request a legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark or to obtain a legibly dated receipt from a commercial carrier or U.S. Postal Service. Private metered postmarks shall not be acceptable as proof of timely mailing.

Applications hand carried by applicants, courier services, or by overnight/express mail couriers shall be considered as meeting the announced deadline only if they are received on or before the deadline date, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., at the ACYF Operations Center, 1225 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 415, Arlington, VA 22202, between Monday and Friday (excluding Federal holidays). (Applicants are cautioned that express/overnight mail services may not always deliver as agreed.)

ACYF cannot accommodate transmission of applications by fax or through other electronic media. Therefore, applications transmitted to ACYF electronically will not be accepted regardless of date or time of submission and time of receipt.

Late applications: Applications which do not meet the criteria above are considered late applications. ACYF shall notify each late applicant that its application will not be considered.

Extension of deadlines: ACF may extend the deadline for all applicants because of acts of God such as floods, hurricanes, etc., or when there is a widespread disruption of the mails, or when it is anticipated that many applications will come from rural or remote areas. However, if ACF does not extend the deadline for all applicants, it may not waive or extend the deadline for any applicants. A determination to waive or extend deadline requirements rests with the Chief Grants Management Officer.

F. Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (P.L. 104-13)

All information collections within this Program Announcement are approved under the following currently valid OMB control numbers: 424, (0348-0043); 424A (0348-0044); 424B (0348-0040); Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (0348-0046); Uniform Project Description (0970-0139), Expiration date 10/31/2000.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

G. Executive Order 12372 - Notification Process

This program is covered under Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," and 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." Under the Order, States may design their own processes for reviewing and commenting on proposed Federal assistance under covered programs.

All States and territories except Alabama, Alaska, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, American Samoa, and Palau have elected to participate in the Executive Order

process and have established Single Points of Contact (SPOCs). Applicants from these jurisdictions need not take action regarding Executive Order 12372.

Applications for projects to be administered by Federally-recognized Indian Tribes are also exempt from the requirements of Executive Order 12372. Otherwise, applicants should contact their SPOC as soon as possible to alert them to the prospective application and to receive any necessary instructions. Applicants must submit any required material to the SPOC as early as possible so that the program office can obtain and review SPOC comments as part of the award process. It is imperative that the applicant submit all required materials, if any, to the SPOC and indicate the date of this submittal (or date of contact if no submittal is required) on the Standard Form 424, item 16a.

Under 45 CFR 100.8(a)(2), a SPOC has 60 days from the application deadline to comment on proposed new or competing continuation awards.

SPOCs are encouraged to eliminate the submission of routine endorsements as official recommendations.

Additionally, SPOCs are requested to clearly differentiate between mere advisory comments and those official State process recommendations which may trigger the "accommodate or explain" rule.

When comments are submitted directly to the ACF, they should be addressed to: Head Start Bureau, Grants Officer, 330 C Street S.W., Room 2310-B, Washington, D.C. 20201.

A list of the Single Points of Contact for each State and Territory is included in Appendix D.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 93.600, Project Head Start.)

DATED: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
James A. Harrell  
Deputy Commissioner  
Administration on Children,  
Youth and Families